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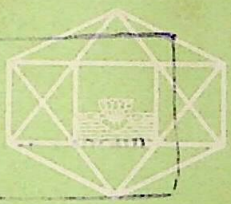
OCTOBER 1977

ALL INDIA MAGAZINE



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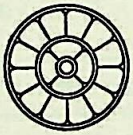
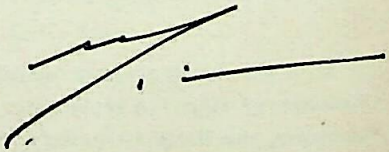


Never grumble. All sorts of forces enter you when you grumble and they pull you down. Keep smiling .... It is a confidence born from the psychic. A smile expresses the faith that nothing can stand against the Divine and that everything will come out all right in the end.



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LIBRARY
No... .....
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BENARAS

The Mother giving a Message
On a Darshan Day — 24. 4. 1953

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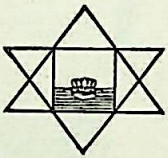

It is no longer towards division and difference that we should turn our minds but on unity, union, even oneness, necessary for the pursuit and realisation of a common ideal.

Sri Aurobindo

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SRI AUROBINDO

(Photograph taken in 1919-20)

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The Mind and the Psychic

The chief obstacle in you is the mind. If you can quiet your mind and give the psychic being a chance, that will be your spiritual salvation. Your mind is inordinately active, too full of questionings, too shrewd, worldly and practical, too much given to doubt and self-defence. All that is very useful in worldly life, it helps to bring success, but it is not the way to succeed in Yoga. No doubt in Yoga, the critical rational mind (self-critical as well as critical of things outside you) is an element that has its value so long as the true inner discrimination does not come; but of itself it cannot carry you on the way, it will only make your progress slow and stumbling. *There must be something in you that will open itself directly to the Truth and Light.*[1] The unregenerated vital being of man cannot do that because it demands of the higher Power that it shall satisfy the vital desires, demands, ambitions, vanity, pride etc., before it will accept the Truth. The unillumined mind also cannot do it because it refuses to recognise the Truth unless the Truth first satisfies its own judgments, ideas, opinions, critical or conven-

[1] Italics are of the editor.

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tional standards, — unless in a word the Truth consents to narrow itself into the moulds of the mind's own ignorance. It is the psychic being alone that turns to the Truth directly, feels it instinctively behind all appearances and in spite of all disguises, accepts it without any egoistic demand or condition, is ready to serve it without reserve or refusal. It is the psychic being also that can at once feel and reject all imitations of the Truth, all shows, all pretences.

SRI AUROBINDO

The integral Yoga, refusing to rely upon the fragile stuff of mental and moral ideals, puts its whole emphasis in this field on three central dynamic processes — the development of the true soul or psychic being to take the place of the false soul of desire, the sublimation of human into divine love, the elevation of consciousness from its mental to its spiritual and supramental plane by whose power alone both the soul and the life-force can be utterly delivered from the veils and prevarications of the Ignorance.

Sri Aurobindo

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LIGHT

Airy, it radiates.

Botanical name: Cestrum diurnum *Common name:* Day Jessamine

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A Wonderful Filter[1]

You are to open yourself to the Divine and receive Him. Usually you open yourself in all directions to everything and everybody in the world. You open your surface being and receive there all sorts of influences from all quarters. So inside you there comes about what we can call a hotch-potch of all contrary and contradictory movements: and that creates difficulties without number. Now instead of that, live away from the surface, from the outside and open up to the Divine and receive nothing but the Divine force. If you can do that all difficulties practically disappear. But, of course, the trouble is there. Unless one is alchemically conditioned, it is an impossibility to have relations with people, to talk to them, to deal with them, have interchanges with them and yet not absorb somehing out of them. If one can surround oneself with an atmosphere that acts as a filter, then all that come from outside are checked and sifted before they reach you or touch you. That needs a good training and a large experience. That is why people in ancient days who wanted an easier path took to solitude, into the depths

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of the forest, on the top of a hill or under a cave so that they might not have to deal with people — for that naturally reduces undesirable interchanges. Only, it has also been found that such people begin to take an enormous interest in the life of animals and plants instead of men: for it is indeed difficult to do without interchange with something or other. So the best thing would be to face the problem squarely, to clothe yourself with an atmosphere totally concentrated on the Divine so that whatever passes across is filtered in its passage. And further, there is the question of food. The body is obliged to take in foreign matter in order to subsist, it would therefore absorb at the same time a fair quantity of inert and unconscious forces or that of some not very desirable consciousness. I once spoke to you of the consciousness that one absorbs with food, there is also unconsciousness that one absorbs in the same way. That is why in many systems of Yoga you are advised to offer first to the Divine your food and then eat it: it means calling down the Divine into your food before absorbing it. Offering means putting in contact: the food is put in contact with the Divine, i.e. put under His influence. This is a very good, a very useful procedure; if you knew how to do it, it would

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You cannot take in a single breath of air without absorbing the vibrations, the numberless vibrations that come from all kinds of movements and all kinds of people.

The Mother

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diminish very much the labour of the inner transformation that one has to do. For in the world we live in solidarity with all others. You cannot take in a single breath of air without absorbing the vibrations, the numberless vibrations that come from all kinds of movements and all kinds of people. So if you want to keep yourself intact, you must, as I have said, maintain yourself in the condition of a filter allowing nothing undesirable to enter. Or put on a mask as one does when crossing an infected and poisoned locality, or do something similar.

One must have around oneself an atmosphere so condensed, condensed in a spirit of total surrender, that nothing can enter without being automatically filtered. There are wicked thoughts, evil will about you, harmful foundations sent out by bad people. The air pullulates with these: dark noisome bacilli. It is so troublesome to be always on the look-out, at every step to be on one's guard, to move slowly with care and caution and precautions; even then one is not sure. But if you cover yourself with the cloak of light, the light of a happy, sincere surrender, and aspiration, that is a wonderful filter, that gives you automatic protection. The undesirable forces not only cannot enter, they are thrown back upon their originator, the attackers themselves become their own victims.

Based on the Mother's talk

(*Collected Works of Nolini Kanta Gupta*, Vol. 4, pp. 94-95)

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Ambition!

When I had the Nirvana experience at Baroda I thought at that time that I had no ambition left — at least personal ambition — in the work that I was doing for the country. Then I used to hear a voice within me telling me all about my inner movement. When I reached Calcutta (1908) I heard this voice pointing out things within me which showed that there was personal ambition of which I was till then quite unconscious. So these things can hide for a very long time.

It is like the contest for (...) Presidentship in which both sides maintain that it is not ambition that is moving them, but the sense of duty, call of the cause, principles etc. !

(*From the reports of Sri Aurobindo's talks*)

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Why Am I Here?

Q: The fact of being born with a psychic being and upon earth which is a spiritual symbol proves that we have each one of us a great responsibility, doesn't it?

Surely. One has a big responsibility, it is to fulfil a special mission that one is born upon earth. Only, naturally, the psychic being must have reached a certain degree of development; otherwise it could be said that it is the whole earth which has the responsibility. The more conscious and individualised one becomes, the more should one have the sense of responsibility. But this is what happens at a given moment; one begins to think that one is here not without reason, without purpose. One realises suddenly that one is here because there is something to be done and this something is not anything egoistic. This seems to me the most logical way of entering upon the path — all of a sudden to realise, "Since I am here, it means that I have a mission to fulfil. Since I have been endowed with a consciousness, it is that I have something to do with that consciousness — what is it?"

Generally, it seems to me that this is the first question one should put to oneself: "Why am I here?"

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I have seen this in children, even in children of five or six: "Why am I here, why do I live?" And then to search, with whatever consciousness is available, with a very little bit of consciousness: why am I here, for what reason?

This seems to me the normal starting-point.

THE MOTHER

(*Questions and Answers — 1950-51*, Cent. ed., p. 246)

We are conscious of only an insignificant portion of our being; for the most part we are unconscious. It is this unconsciousness that keeps us down to our unregenerate nature and prevents change and transformation in it. It is through unconsciousness that the undivine forces enter into us and make us their slaves.

The Mother

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The Need of Discipline

Discipline itself is not something especially Western; in Oriental countries like Japan, China and India it was at one time all-regulating and supported by severe sanctions in a way that Westerners would not tolerate. Socially whatever objections we may make to it, it is a fact that it preserved Hindu religion and Hindu society through the ages and through all vicissitudes. In the political field there was, on the contrary, indiscipline, individualism and strife; that is one reason why India collapsed and entered into servitude. Organisation and order were attempted but failed to endure. Even in the spiritual life India has had not only the free wandering ascetic, a law to himself, but has felt impelled to create orders of Sannyasins with their rules and governing bodies and there have also been monastic institutions with a strict discipline. Since no work can be done successfully without these things — even the individual worker, the artist for instance, has to go through a severe discipline in order to become efficient — why should the Mother be held to blame if she insists on discipline in the exceedingly difficult work she has put in her charge?

I don't see on what ground you expect order and

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organisation to be carried on without rules and without discipline. You seem to say that people should be allowed complete freedom with only such discipline as they choose to impose upon themselves; that might do if the only thing to be done were for each individual to get some inner realisation and life did not matter or if there were no collective life or work or none that had any importance. But this is not the case here. We have undertaken a work which includes life and action and the physical world. In what I am trying to do, the spiritual realisation is the first necessity, but it cannot be complete without an outer realisation also in life, in men, in this world. Spiritual consciousness within but also spiritual life without. The Ashram as it is now is not that ideal, for that all its members have to live in a spiritual consciousness and not in the ordinary egoistic mind and mainly rajasic vital nature. But, all the same, the Ashram is a first form which our effort has taken, a field in which the preparatory work has to be done. The Mother has to maintain it and for that all this order and organisation has to be there and it cannot be done without rules and discipline. Discipline is even necessary for the overcoming of the ego and the mental preferences and the rajasic vital nature, as a help to it at any rate. If these were overcome outward rules etc. would be less necessary; spontaneous agreement, unity, harmony and spontaneous right action might take its place. But while the present state of things exists, by the abandonment or leaving out of discipline except such as people choose or not choose to impose upon themselves, the result would be failure and dis-

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aster.... On that principle the work also would have gone to pot, there would have been nothing but strife, assertion by each worker of his own idea and self-will and constant clashes; even as it is, that has abounded and it is only the Mother's authority, the frame of work she has given and her skill in getting incompatibilities to act together that has kept things going. ... ...

I have tried to explain our standpoint and have gone to some length to do it. Whether it is agreed with or not, at any rate it is a standpoint and I think a rational one. I am writing only on the surface and I do not speak of what is behind or from the Yogic standpoint, the standpoint of the Yogic consciousness from which we act; that would be more difficult to express. This is merely for intellectual satisfaction and there there is always room for dispute.

25. 2. 1945 SRI AUROBINDO

(*The Mother*, Cent. ed. vol. 25, pp. 228-32)

To break away from the old traditions and not to obey the old rules is good — but on condition that one discovers in oneself a higher and a truer consciousness which manifests harmony, peace, beauty and a superior order, vast and progressive.

The Mother

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Purpose of Art

...True art is the expression of beauty in the material world; and in a world entirely changed spiritually, that is to say, one expressing completely the divine reality, art must function as a revealer and teacher of this divine beauty in life; that is to say, an artist should be capable of entering into communion with the Divine and of receiving inspiration about what form or forms ought to be used to express the divine beauty in matter. And thus, if it does that, art can be a means of realisation of beauty, and at the same time a teacher of what beauty ought to be, that is, art should be an element in the education of men's taste, of young and old, and it is the teaching of true beauty, that is, the essential beauty which expresses the divine truth. This is the *raison d'être* of art. Now, between this and what is done there is a great difference, but this is the true *raison d'être* of art.

28. 10. 1953

THE MOTHER

(*Questions and Answers - 1953*, pp. 332-33)

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Q: Is it possible for a Yogi to become an artist or can an artist be a Yogi? What is the relation of Art to Yoga?

The two are not so antagonistic as you seem to think. There is nothing to prevent a Yogi from being an artist or an artist from being a Yogi. But when you are in Yoga, there is a profound change in the values of things, of Art as of everything else; you begin to look at Art from a very different standpoint. It is no longer the one supreme all-engrossing thing for you, no longer an end in itself. Art is a means, not an end; it is a means of expression. And the artist then ceases too to believe that the whole world turns round what he is doing or that his work is the most important thing that has ever been done. His personality counts no longer; he is an agent, a channel, his art a means of expressing his relations with the Divine. He uses it for that purpose as he might have used any other means that were part of the powers of his nature.

Q: But does an artist feel at all any impulse to create once he takes up Yoga?

Why should he not have the impulse? He can express his relation with the Divine in the way of his art, exactly as he would in any other. If you want art to be the true and highest art, it must be the expression of a divine world brought down into this material world. All true artists have some feeling of this kind, some sense that they are intermediaries between a higher

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world and this physical existence. If you consider it in this light, Art is not very different from Yoga. But most often the artist has only an indefinite feeling, he has not the knowledge. Still, I knew some who had it; they worked consciously at their art with the knowledge. In their creation they did not put forward their personality as the most important factor; they considered their work as an offering to the Divine, they tried to express by it their relation with the Divine.

This was the avowed function of Art in the Middle Ages. The "primitive" painters, the builders of cathedrals in Mediaeval Europe had no other conception of art. In India all her architecture, her sculpture, her painting have proceeded from this source and were inspired by this ideal. The songs of Mirabai and the music of Thyagaraja, the poetic literature built up by her devotees, saints and Rishis rank among the world's greatest artistic possessions.

Q: But does the work of an artist improve if he does Yoga?

The discipline of Art has at its centre the same principle as the discipline of Yoga. In both the aim is to become more and more conscious; in both you have to learn to see and feel something that is beyond the ordinary vision and feeling, to go within and bring out from there deeper things. Painters have to follow a discipline for the growth of the consciousness of their eyes, which in itself is almost a Yoga. If they are true artists and try to see beyond and use their art for the

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expression of the inner world, they grow in consciousness by this concentration, which is not other than the consciousness given by Yoga. Why then should not Yogic consciousness be a help to artistic creation? I have known some who had very little training and skill and yet through Yoga acquired a fine capacity in writing and painting. Two examples I can cite to you. One was a girl who had no education whatever; she was a dancer and danced tolerably well. After she took up Yoga, she danced only for friends; but her dancing attained a depth of expression and beauty which was not there before. And although she was not educated, she began to write wonderful things; for she had visions and expressed them in the most beautiful language. But there were ups and downs in her Yoga, and when she was in a good condition, she wrote beautifully, but otherwise was quite dull and stupid and uncreative. The second case is that of a boy who had studied art, but only just a little. The son of a diplomat, he had been trained for the diplomatic career; but he lived in luxury and his studies did not go far. Yet as soon as he took up Yoga, he began to produce inspired drawings which carried the expression of an inner knowledge and were symbolic in character; in the end he became a great artist.

28. 7. 1929 THE MOTHER

(*Questions and Answers - 1929*, pp. 104-106)

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The New Humanity

The world is in the throes of a new creation and the pangs of that new birth have made mother Earth restless. It is no longer a far-off ideal that our imagination struggles to visualise, nor a prophecy that yet remains to be fulfilled. It is Here and Now.

Although we may not know it, the New Man — the divine race of humanity is already among us. It may be in our next neighbour, in our nearest brother, even in myself. Only a thin veil covers it. It marches just behind the line. It waits for an occasion to throw off the veil and place itself in the forefront. We are living in strenuous times in which age-long institutions are going down and new forces rearing their heads, old habits are being cast off and new impulsions acquired. In every sphere of life, we see the urgent demand for a recasting, a fresh valuation of things. From the base to the summit, from the economic and political life to the artistic and spiritual, humanity is being shaken to bring out a new expression and articulation. There is the hidden surge of a Power, the secret stress of a Spirit that can no longer suffer to remain in the shade and behind the mask, but wills to come out in

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the broad daylight and be recognised in its plenary virtues.

That Power, that Spirit has been growing and gathering its strength during all the millenniums that humanity has lived through. On the momentous day when man appeared on earth, the Higher Man also took his birth. Since the hour the Spirit refused to be imprisoned in its animal sheath and came out as man, it approached by that very uplift a greater freedom and a vaster movement. It was the crest of that underground wave which peered over the surface from age to age, from clime to clime through the experiences of poets and prophets and sages — the Head of the Sacrificial Horse galloping towards the Dawn. And now the days of captivity or rather of inner preparation are at an end. The voice in the wilderness was necessary, for it was a call and a communion in the silence of the soul. Today the silence seeks utterance. Today the shell is ripe enough to break and to bring out the mature and full-grown being. The king that was in hiding comes in glory and triumph, in his complete regalia.

Another humanity is rising out of the present human species. The beings of the new order are everywhere and it is they who will soon hold sway over earth, be the head and front of the terrestrial evolution in the cycle that is approaching as it was with man in the cycle that is passing away. What will this new order of being be like? It will be what man is not, also what man is. It will not be man, because it will

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overstep the limitations and incapacities inherent in man; and it will be man by the realisation of those fundamental aspirations and yearnings that have troubled and consoled the deeper strata — the soul — in him throughout the varied experiences of his terrestrial life.

The New Man will be Master — and not slave. He will be master, first, of himself and then of the world. Man as he actually is, is but a slave. He has no personal voice or choice; the determining soul, the *Ishwara*, in him is sleep-bound and hushed. He is a mere plaything in the hands of nature and circumstances. Therefore it is that Science has become his supreme *Dharmashastra*; for science seeks to teach us the moods of Nature and the methods of propitiating her. Our actual ideal of man is that of the cleverest slave. But the New Man will have found himself and by and according to his inner will, mould and create his world. He will not be in awe of Nature and in an attitude of perpetual apprehension and hesitation, but will ground himself on a secret harmony and union that will declare him as the lord. We will recognise the New Man by his very gait and manner, by a certain kingly ease and dominion in every shade of his expression.

Not that this sovereign power will have anything to do with aggression or over-bearingness. It will not be a power that feels itself only by creating an eternal opponent — *Erbfeind* — by coming in constant clash with a rival, that seeks to gain victory by subjugating. It will not be Nietzschean "will to power," which is, at best,

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a supreme *Asuric* power. It will rather be a Divine Power, for the strength it will exert and the victory it will achieve will not come from the ego — it is the ego which requires an object outside and against to feel and affirm itself — but it will come from a higher personal self which is one with the cosmic soul and therefore with other personal souls. The Asura, in spite of, or rather, because of his aggressive vehemence betrays a lack of the sovereign power that is calm and at ease and self-sufficient. The Devic power does not assert but simply accomplishes; the forces of the world act not as its opponent but as its instrument. Thus the New Man shall affirm his individual sovereignty and do so to perfection by expressing through it his unity with the cosmic powers, with the infinite godhead. And by being *Swarat*, Self-Master, he will become *Samrat*, world-master.

This mastery will be effected not merely in will, but in mind and heart also. For the New Man will know not by the intellect which is egocentric and therefore limited, not by ratiocination which is an indirect

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Man as he actually is, is but a slave. He has no personal voice or choice.... He is a mere plaything in the hands of nature and circumstances.... Our actual ideal of man is that of the cleverest slave. But the New Man will have found himself and by and according to his inner will, mould and create his world.

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and doubtful process, but by direct vision, an inner communion, a soul revelation. The new knowledge will be vast and profound and creative, based as it will be upon the reality of things and not upon their shadows. Truth will shine through every experience and every utterance — "a truth shall have its seat on our speech and mind and hearing", so have the Vedas said. The mind and intellect will not be active and constructive agents but the luminous channel of a self-luminous knowledge. And the heart too which is now the field of passion and egoism will be cleared of its noise and obscurity; a serener sky will shed its pure warmth and translucent glow. The knot will be rent asunder — *bhidyate hṛdayagranthih* — and the vast and mighty streams of another ocean will flow through. We will love not merely those to whom we are akin but God's creatures, one and all; we will love not with the yearning and hunger of a mortal but with the wide and intense *Rasa* that lies in the divine identity of souls.

And the new society will be based not upon competition, nor even upon co-operation. It will not be an open conflict, neither will it be a convenient compromise of rival individual interests. It will be the organic expression of the collective soul of humanity, working and achieving through each and every individual soul its most wide-winging freedom, manifesting the godhead that is proper to each and every one. It will be an organisation, most delicate and subtle and supple, the members of which will have no need to live upon one another but in and through one another. It will be, if

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you like, a henotheistic hierarchy in which everyone will be the greatest, since everyone is all and all everyone simultaneously.

The New Humanity will be something in the mould that we give the gods. It will supply the link that we see missing between gods and men; it will be the race of embodied gods. Man will attain that thing which has been his first desire and earliest dream, for which he coveted the gods — Immortality, *amṛtatvam*. The moralities that cut and divide, limit and bind man make him the sorrowful being he is. These are due to his ignorance and weakness and egoism. These are due to his soul itself. It is the soul that requires change, a new birth, as Christ demanded. Ours is a little soul that has severed itself from the larger and mightier self that it is. And therefore does it die every moment and even while living is afraid to live and so lives poorly and miserably. But the age is now upon us when the god-like soul anointed with its immortal royalties is ready to emerge and claim our salutation.

The breath and the surge of the new creation cannot be mistaken. The question that confronts us today is no longer whether the New Man, the Super-humanity, will come or if at all, when; but the question we have to answer is who among us are ready to be its receptacle, its instrument and embodiment.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

(*Evolution and the Earthly Destiny*, pp. 109-112)

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Information Letter

On AUGUST 15, at the Ashram, the celebration of the birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo began with a visit to Sri Aurobindo's room and distribution of the pictures of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother (1950) reproduced on a beautiful card. There was a collective meditation around the Samadhi at 10 a.m., and in the evening, March Past in the Playground to the accompaniment of the Ashram band. The programme concluded with meditation. Exhibitions of the offerings of hand-work done by Ashramites were arranged at several departments of the Ashram and at the Town-Hall. All India Radio, Pondicherry, broadcast two programmes on August 15: a special musical feature captioned "Aravindam" in Tamil, written and produced by Shri T. V. R. Chari and a talk in English by Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, entitled "At Peace with Oneself".

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE of the members of Sri Aurobindo Society and the Sri Aurobindo's Action was held at the Ashram Theatre from August 12 to 14. Shri Pradyot Bhattacharya inaugurated the conference. In his welcome speech he reminded the participants of the words of Sri Aurobindo: "*In the hour of God cleanse thy soul of all self-deceit and hypocrisy and vain self-flattering that thou mayst look straight into thy spirit and hear that which summons it.*" Shri Navajata, in his speech, presented the task before all. "*What then shall be our ideal?*", to quote Sri Aurobindo,

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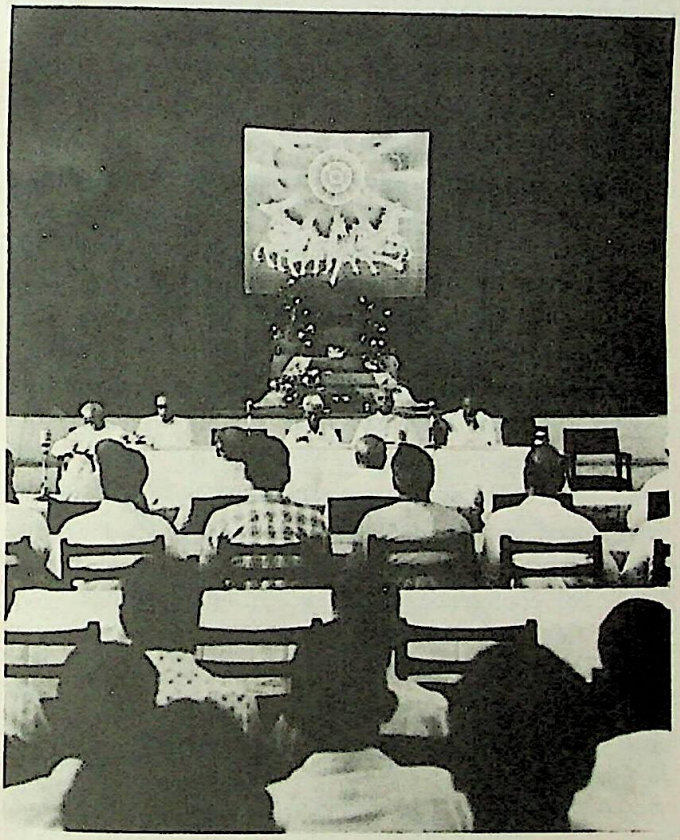

At the Society's Annual Conference: On the platform is seen the Mother's chair. Seated (*from left to right*) are Shri Dyuman, Shri M. P. Pandit, Shri Pradyot Bhattacharya, Shri Navajata and Shri Counouma.

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"Unity for the human race by an inner oneness and not only by an external association of interests; the resurgence of man out of the merely animal and economic life or the merely intellectual and aesthetic into the glories of the spiritual existence; the pouring of the power of the spirit into the physical mould and mental instrument so that man may develop his manhood into true supermanhood.... These three are one; for man's unity and man's self-transcendence can come only by living in the Spirit." Shri M. P. Pandit spoke on "The Relevance of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother to the Present Day Man". Shri Udar recited excerpts from *Savitri*.

Various commissions formed with the members present at the conference had their sittings on August 13 and 14 and their suggestions were received by the chairman. The conference also passed a resolution on Auroville, based on the findings of the Auroville good-will commission.

At the conference, Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar gave a talk on "The Mother's Birth Centenary" and Dr. Nirodbaran spoke on "Sri Aurobindo". Shri H. N. Mazumdar and Smt. Arundhati Rai Chowdhury (A.I.R. artist) presented two programmes of recitations of "Sri Aurobindo O Shri Mayer Jeeban Alekhya" in Bengali. The participants also attended a music programme "Homage to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo" and a film-show and participated in the Sunday evening meditation at the Ashram Playground.

There is a truth to know, a work to do...

(*Savitri*, p. 72)

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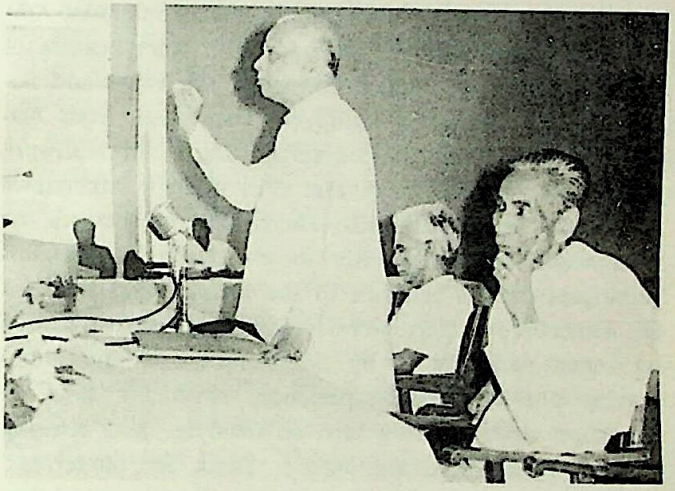
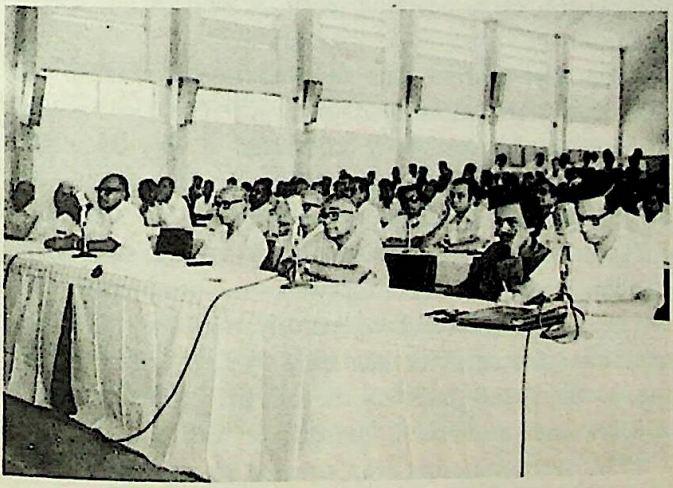


(*Top*) Shri Navajata speaking at the conference. In chairs are Shri Pradyot Bhattacharya and Shri Counouma (*extreme right*)

(*Below*) A view of the participants



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WORKERS' CAMP: After the Annual Conference was over, the active workers, including the office-bearers of the different centres and branches of Sri Aurobindo Society, held a Workers' Camp for four days, from August 16 to 19, as announced earlier. Dr. H. Maheshwari, Shri M. M. Bhattacharya and Shri Ashvin Mahadevia conducted the deliberations. There were no lectures, no ready-made talks in answer to preconceived problems. Important themes relevant to the *mission and work* of Sri Aurobindo Society were initiated and were followed by active participation by the members of the group sharing one another's experience, advancing different points of view, entering into self-analyses and eliciting implicit truths. "We are here to think for ourselves," appealed Dr. Maheshwari several times, "in order that we rise to a clear understanding about our mission and our work." The camp had seven sessions of two and half hours each, devoting each session to a specific theme.

The first session was devoted to "*The Aims and Objects of Sri Aurobindo Society*." The deliberations focused on the distinctive character of this Society as different from various other kinds of organisations. Referring to the guiding principles given by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, the group moved towards an understanding that the object in view was to prepare ourselves, individually and collectively, for that life which has been envisaged for humanity by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and that all the activities of the centres and branches must be in consonance with that objective.

The second session was devoted to the theme "*The*

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Society Centres as Sadhana Centres". The deliberations covered the process of individual Sadhana along with collective programmes, meditation, prayer, Svadhyaya, the meaning of opening up to the Mother, dedication of work and the significance of spirituality in life. The consensus was that the centres should become living temples of spiritual inspiration where the Presence of the Mother and the Master could be spontaneously felt.

The third session considered "*The Orientation of Work at the Centres*". Discussing the conventional notions of gain and success, the deliberations moved towards considering the true attitude behind taking up any work, its Sadhana aspect and the spirit of offering oneself through work. The attention of the participants was drawn to the article of Nolini Kanta Gupta, "The Ideal Centre" (published in All India Magazine, October 1974 issue), and to the fifth section of Sri Aurobindo's book, "The Mother".

The subject taken up at the fourth session was "*The Society Centres as Study Centres*". Recognising the importance of the clarity of understanding in Sri Aurobindo's Yoga, the need of promoting studies at the centres was emphasised. The specific importance of Svadhyaya, contemplative study, conducted studies of the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, expository talks, semi-

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Clarity of knowledge and inner self-vision, subjugation of the ego, love, [and] scrupulousness in selfless and dedicated works, are the four wheels of the chariot of yoga. One who has them will progress safely on the path.

9.9.1947 **Sri Aurobindo**

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nars and symposia were discussed. The requirements of a library at each centre became obvious. A printed note on Svadhyaya was made available to the participants of the camp. Necessary precautions against confused and confusing intellectuality were also raised in the discussions and notes were sounded on the necessity of caution in choosing speakers.

The fifth session was devoted to "*The Organisational Details of the Centres*", for an efficient working. The importance of maintaining proper records, membership register, accounts, correspondence, regular report of activities to the Head Office, etc. etc., were taken note of. The fields of mutual help between Centres and the Head Office were traced. The need of more effective rapport with the Head Office and closer contacts with other neighbouring centres were strongly felt.

The sixth session discussed "*The Society Centres as Cultural Centres*". The first point raised was about a comprehensive meaning of culture. It was understood that art and literature and religion and philosophy, everything that expressed the inward refinement of human nature was an aspect of culture. Every centre, therefore, should represent the high values of life through lofty activities and programmes which promote truth, beauty, love, harmony and unity in life as against division, unconsciousness, ignorance, inertia and falsehood. Sharing of ideas and experiences led to the realisation

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A divine life in a divine body is the formula of the ideal that we envisage.

Sri Aurobindo

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that even the smallest detail of arrangements and activities at the centres deserved to be brought to rhythm and beauty and harmony.

The seventh and the last session was devoted to "*The Mother's Birth Centenary Programme*". During the first part of the session various ideas of the celebration were discussed, emphasising the importance of becoming ourselves worthy of the Centenary. During the second part, Dr. Maheshwari impressed upon the members the need and importance of initiating certain movements during the Centenary period which should go on developing in the future contributing to an effective preparation of the society as a whole, for an ideal life. He suggested and explained four such movements: i) Svadhyaya, regular as well as time to time, contemplative studies of spiritual literature, ii) New Education according to the Mother's vision, iii) Health augmentation in the light of the Mother's teachings, and iv) Sanskrit, learning and promoting it as the cultural language of India, which could be her national language according to the Mother. It was felt that all these four movements would enhance the work of preparing the entire society for the great ideal to which the centres are pledged.

The camp closed with prayer and gratitude to the Mother, feeling expressly that such camps for the workers should be held here regularly every year and also at central places in the different parts of India.

A Centre must be the pure hearth of perfect sincerity, in a total consecration to the Divine.

The Mother

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NEWS of the celebration of Sri Auroibndo's Birthday on August 15 is received from several Centres and Branches of the Society. Details will be published in our next issue. More and more people are attracted towards our Centres in quest of their search of a New Life. We should remember the words of Sri Aurobindo, *"Our aim is not... to found a religion or a school of philosophy or a school of Yoga, but to create a ground and a way of spiritual growth and experience and a way, which will bring down a greater Truth beyond the mind but not inaccessible to the human soul and consciousness."*

AMRAVATI Branch of the Society has offered to meet the expenses of a set of framed photographs of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, for each new Centre of the Society which may be opened in India, after the approval by the head office.

Shri BABULAL SAHA visited the Centres at Bhagalpur, Gaya, Naugachhia, Katihar, Purnea, Araria, Deoghar, Dumka and Ranchi. He gave several suggestions for their activities. He also spoke at the P. G. departments of the Bhagalpur and Ranchi Universities.

At Sri Aurobindo Pathmandir, CALCUTTA, during September, Smt. Sudha Bose, spoke on "*The Mother*", Dr. N. B. Chakraborty on "*Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy*", Dr. Haraprosad Mitra on "*Sri Aurobindo's Literature*" and Prof. P. N. Bhattacharya on "*The Life Divine*", in their study-circle meetings.

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BANGALORE Branch of the Society arranged four talks by Dr. H. Maheshwari at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Hall, from July 7 to 10, 1977. The Subject of the talks were: "Life has a Purpose, Man has a Goal", "Yoga: Its Meaning and Aim", "Yoga and Life: Life in Yoga", "Sri Aurobindo: His Relevance Today and Tomorrow".

At a Symposium organised by the branch on 'New Dimensions in Education', Rev. Father John B. Chethimattam presented 'Educational Ideals in a Changing World'. Dr. Maheshwari gave glimpses of the integral system of education at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education at the Ashram and traced the basis of the system to the vision of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

During this visit, Dr. Maheshwari also addressed the students of Sri Aurobindo Memorial School and met the Staff members and teachers of MES College at Malleswaram. A one day camp was organised at Visvaneedham, on the outskirts of Bangalore, for Svadhyaya and questions and answers on Integral Yoga. He also suggested several activities that can be undertaken by the Branch for the Centenary Year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MATRIMANDIR BROCHURE: A pictorial survey depicting the construction of the Matrimandir at Auroville, from its beginning upto February 1977, is prepared in a 101 pages brochure of 7" x 9" size. Any branch, centre or an individual who offers Rs. 100/-

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before 31. 10. 1977, will get a copy of this brochure. The cheque/D.D. may be drawn in the name of "Sri Aurobindo Society — Matrimandir".

MATRIMANDIR CONSTRUCTION: In the construction of the inner chamber of the Matrimandir, best available white marble will be used and the work of fixing the marble slabs will start shortly. The cost of each such marble slab is Rs. 3000/- or 350 dollars. Those who wish to make offerings for this purpose may send their cheque/D. D. drawn in the name of "Sri Aurobindo Society — Matrimandir" to Shri Guru Pershad, General Secretary, Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, 605002.

The organisation "SAD-VICHAR PARIVAR", a registered trust at Ahmedabad publishes every year, on the eve of Dipawali, a compilation of quotations in a booklet captioned, "Amrit-Bindu", which is used as "New Year's Gift" by many individuals and business firms. The 22nd issue, to be published in October this year, will contain selected words of the Mother, and 5 lacs copies are proposed to be printed. The cost of 1000 copies, including the printing of one's name on the cover, is Rs. 175 for the Gujarati edition and Rs. 250 for the Hindi and English editions. Those who are interested in buying 1000 booklets or more may directly write to: Sad-Vichar Parivar, Behind Dariyapur Tower, Ahmedabad, 380001. They also publish a monthly "Su-Vichar" in Gujarati, and the annual membership subscription of the organisation is Rs. 8.

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A SADHANA-SATSANG is organised at Sri Aurobindo Yoga Mandir, Jwalapur (Hardwar), U. P., from October 8 to 12, 1977. The general approach, as the organisers write, will be a persistent thought, feeling and seeking for a contact with the Mother. The early morning programme will include meditation, music and a short talk on the ways and bye-ways of meditation. Forenoons will be devoted to spiritual quest collectively pursued as to the Mother's insights regarding life, work, social relations, progressive fulfilment, etc. Everyday evening, a talk on a distinctive aspect of the Mother's personality will be given. Board and lodging arrangements available at Rs. 5/- per day. All interested are welcome.

Accommodation for February 1978

On the occasion of the Mother's Birth Centenary we expect a heavy rush of visitors to Pondicherry in February 1978. The accommodation at our Guest Houses being very much limited, we are forced to reserve extra accommodation in local hotels and other places which may not be as good as ours in cleanliness, atmosphere or facilities. But the alternative would be to say 'no' to you, which we would not like. The type of accommodation and the guest house requested by you may not be available. But we shall try our best to provide an alternative accommodation and advise you accordingly much in advance, so that you can proceed straight to the place of your stay and report to the Accommodation Section at your convenience on the

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arrival day. The following procedure may strictly be followed in order to be sure of your accommodation.

1. Please send us your request before 31. 12. 1977, *exactly* as per the proforma printed on the next page.

2. Full amount in advance for the complete duration of your stay must be sent with your application, by crossed cheque, bank draft or Postal Orders, payable to "Sri Aurobindo Society — Accommodation Section". Please count the amount at Rs. 3 per head per day for dormitory and Rs. 10 per head per day for rooms. Remittance by Money Orders should be avoided. The advance so sent will be adjusted with the actual charges. Since the hotels and other places have to be paid in advance, these amounts are non-refundable. However in case you wish to cancel your reservation, please inform us latest by 15. 1. 1978, and only in such cases the amount paid will be refunded.

3. On receiving your application, an intimation about the place of your accommodation planned and a reference number will be sent to you before 31. 12. 1977. You are requested to bring this intimation or at least the correct reference number when you come here. Also quote this number in your all future correspondence.

Please note that the applications unaccompanied by FULL advance amount or incomplete in any way will not be considered.

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draft/P.O. No..... dt..... on bank.....

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Remarks (if any):

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(For Office Use Only)

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UNJAL SEVA TO LORD VENKATESWARA

Devotees rejoice at the sight of their Lord in different moods and in different alankarams. The Lord, who is above gunas and above avasthas, is neither afflicted nor afflictable. But His devotees experience Him in themselves. Hence the anxiety of the gopies that the thorns in the bushes might hurt His tender feet, even though they know well that He is none other than Narayana who has come down at the request of Brahma for the sole purpose of protecting the entire Universe.

It is no wonder therefore that devotees wish to imagine and see Lord Venkateswara relaxed and happy, ready to give them permanent riches and well-being (achalaam sriyam).

This is the significance of the Unjal seva conducted daily in Tirumala in the Iyna Mahal, (hall of mirrors). This seva is done every day in the evenings after 6 p.m. The Utsava Murti with full ornaments is placed on a gaily decorated Unjal along with His consorts. Gandha and Chamara Upacharas are given to Him and the Unjal is swung slowly to the accompaniment of Vedaparayana, music etc.

Grihasthas who wish to participate in this half an hour function can do so by purchasing tickets for Rs. 1,000/-. Six members of the family can attend and after the seva a golden dollar worth Rs. 250/- and vastra bahumanam will be presented to the Grihastha. Darsan of the Mula Murti will also be arranged for the party.

Executive Officer
Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati

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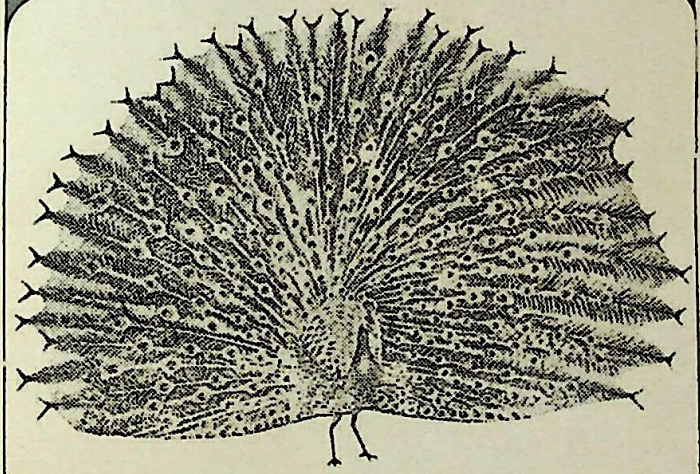
PEACOCK

-the bird with feathers of many splendoured hue



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